Chronology
APH Building, 1839 Frankfort Ave.

1881

The large increase in the amount of work consequent upon the annual grant from Congress has made a necessity for more room than it is convenient for the Ky Institution for the Education of the Blind to give. While the American Printing House for the Blind was mainly supported by the state, and the exigencies of the Commonwealth prevented the regular payment of the State's bounty to the Trustees, they were glad to accept, free of rent, the use of rooms in the KY Institution for the Blind for many years. but last year the State Auditor was able to pay all arrearages to the American Printing House for the Blind and the Trustees have now the means to put up a building adequate to their wants.

At the request of the Trustees the last Legislature stopped the annual subsidy given to maintain the Printing House for the blind, but as the act of Congress endowing the American Printing House for the Blind expressly prohibits the use of any portion of that annual subsidy to be used for the lease or erection of buildings, it has seemed to the Trustees eminently appropriate to put up a building with some of the funds obtained from the arrearages of annual appropriations from the State. (W. F. Bullock, President,
14th report 1881)

Dec. 23, 1881 Special Board meeting for discussion of building site for Printing House

Considered various properties, decided that Franz property, adjacent west of KY Inst. for Blind grounds was most desirable

Jan 2 1882

Jefferson & Carter appointed to approach Franz re purchase of property

Jan. 7 1882

Prepare & present bill to legislature for formal authority to erect a bldg on grounds of KIB or to purchase land elsewhere.

March 25 1882

Bill passed legislature. Jefferson, Carter & Barrett authorized to purchase Franz property.

Jefferson Bell & Huntoon appointed to prepare plans & consult an architect

April 13 1882

Board viewed Franz tract and agreed to purchase it.

April 18, 1882

Deed to 6.8 A (@$1,400 per A) for $9,520 purchased from David Franz, Sr. Franz had purchased the property in 1875 from B. M. and Josephine Patten. Patten was first supt of KSB (1842-1871) which they purchased in 2 tracts in 1867 & 1868.

1882

A building committee was appointed from the board (Morton, Haldeman et.al.)

Charles J. Clarke, was selected as architect

Charles Julian Clarke (1836 - 1908) was a native of Frankfort & attended schools in Louisville & completed his education at U of K. At an early age he served an apprenticeship in architecture with Henry Whitestone, one of Kentucky's most noted architects of the mid-19th century, and remained with Whitestone until the outbreak of the Civil War. Afterward he worked with the firm of Bradshaw Brothers, then began his own practice. In 1891 he took Arthur Loomis into partnership and maintained an office under the name of Clarke & Loomis during the rest of his life.

In addition to the APH building, Clarke designed the School for the Colored Blind at KSB. Among extant buildings designed by Clarke prior to his association with Loomis, are the old Medical School Building on Broadway and the Carter Dry Goods Building on Main Street which now houses the Museum of History & Science.

May 3 1882

Decided cost of building should not exceed $10,000

July 12, 1882

At a meeting in the office of C. J. Clarke the board voted to accept the following low bids for building construction

Excavation	Dan Tivnan	$93.30
Carpenter work	Tichner	$3250.00
Stone Foundation	Busch	$1345.00
Cut Stone work	John Diebold	$1063.00
Brick work	Bornehauser	$3000.00
Iron work	Snead & Bibb	$1380.00

Tin work	J. W. Smith	$350.00
Plastering	B.J. Campbell	$295.00
Painting	H. Iring	$470.00
Plumbing	Strouse & Newman	$450.00
	TOTAL	**$11,695.30**

TOTAL COST OF LAND AND BUILDING $28,636.88 (LAND 9,520, BUILDING 19,116.88)

July 14, 1882 GROUND BREAKING

The Board met on the grounds purchased from D. Franz, Sr. and fixed the location of the building. After the lines were staked out, Judge Bullock, the President of the Board took the spade and turned the first sod. Dr. Bell turned the next and was followed by Mr. John P. Morton, Mr. John A. Carter, and Mr. T. L. Jefferson who each dug out a spade full of earth and the building was practically begun. The Board then adjourned. (from board minutes by B.B. Huntoon, sec.)

July 26, 1882

Secretary authorized to draw warrants to pay architect Charles J. Clarke

April 3, 1883

Supt receives bids for paving in front of new building and for putting in an elevator and to make a brick walk in front of the building and around it.

June 12, 1883 FORMAL DEDICATION

PROGRAM

Processional song by pupils of KY Institute for the Education of the Blind

Prayer by Rt. Rev. T. U. Dudley, D.D.

Address by Hon. W. F. Bullock, Pres of Board of Trustees

Address by Hon. A. S. Willis, M. C.

Hallelujah Chorus by the Pupils

Benediction

Formal Starting of the Presses to their Work by Hon. W. F. Bullock.

DESCRIPTION

The building is of brick and stone, with a three-story front, forty-five feet long and twenty-five deep, and a two story ell, forty feet long and twenty feet wide, with a fire-proof vault on the east side, seventeen feet square and twelve feet high, for storing stereotype plates.

The building is heated by steam, furnished with water and gas, and contains all the appliances needed for the manufacture of embossed books, including their stereotyping and binding.
(16th annual report, 1883)

1897
Fireproof plate storage vault on east side is extended to double its capacity at cost of $1,612.36.
John Friebert- Stone Mason
J. Dixon Brown & Company- Lumber
R.A. Barnes- Carpenter
W.D. Scoggan- Brickwork
Snead & Company- Ironwork
W.H. Matlack, Iron racks
1900
Second story built on the plate storage vault, a “fireproof store room” to hold unbound books, pamphlets, egg albumen, tar board, cord, and other bindery materials.

April 1911
APH installs a fire escape manufactured by the Dow Iron & Fire Works.

1921
Plan for enlargement made by architect Arthur Loomis, on “west side nearly to the street.”

Nov. 1922—July 1924
The Kentucky legislature appropriates $25,000 for the new building, a two story brick, steel, and concrete manufacturing space. The space will more than double the capacity of press room and bindery and will give large space for storage and packing in the basement. Also more adequate proof reader's room and special room for the embossing of music. Everything fireproof construction with space for several new presses, more stitching machines etc.
Contractors—National Concrete Construction, Theobald Jansen Electrical Company, Gray & Tomppert Plumbing Company, A.J. Anderson (heating), American Elevator Company.

1925
Installation of a sprinkler system by Kentucky Viking Sprinkler Company, according to annual reports, to lower fire insurance rates.

August –October 1926
Plan submitted for proposed building annex in response to need for additional capacity. Third story added to 1922 West Wing Building. Designed by original architect of the wing, Arthur Loomis. Cost $14,638.

New space initially houses the press room.

1933
Iron Fireman installed in furnace.
New plate storage room erected behind the West Wing on the State Street side,
apparently originally entirely free standing. Brick construction with arched windows.

1934
City of Louisville requests permission to construct embankments on the north side of the APH property to support Brownsboro Road.

1936
First recording studio installed in second floor of the original rear “ell.”
Over the next few years the company will install an entire sound recording and record production unit.

1937
Board begins discussing moving plant to new site more suited for manufacturing. Large talking book contracts and an increased federal quota result in extremely overcrowded conditions in the production areas.
APH leases property at 116 South Brook Street and moved Braille printing and stereotyping there by September 1938.

1940
APH leases space at 825-827 West Broadway and moves its South Brook Street operations there along with the bindery, the map depat., the slate dept. and the machine shop.
The failure of efforts to sell the Frankfort Avenue property to the state leads the APH Board to determine to expand operations there.

1941
Model of the proposed manufacturing annex produced.

1946
All operations except talking book dept. and office move to Broadway.
The Board approves the construction of the new annex. Construction begins in the July 1947 at a proposed cost of $250,000. The simple brick and tile factory structure has large windows and a central skylight.

1947
Money raised, architectural plans complete for 2 story, 37,500 sq. ft. factory annex. Cost $285,000.

1948

The printing, binding, and tangible apparatus departments begin moving to the new structure on May 1, 1948. By the end of the year all departments have moved, although the plating department is still not back in business.

1951
Annual report announces new space shortages for storage and administration. Money accumulating in Extension Fund exceeds needs for printing Reader's Digest so it could be designated for new building.

1952
Plans drawn for storage structure behind the 1947 annex to be connected by a short runway. Designed by Wagner & Potts, adding 12,000 Square Feet, with a 75x80' footprint, with two floors. Architect also prepares plans to raze the old east storage vault and replace it with a new three story wing to provide space for recording studios, offices, board room, library, and storage.

1953
Rear annex constructed as planned, used originally to store raw materials, printing plates, and Talking Book masters.

1954
It was decided not to raze the old east storage wing & replace it with a new administration building. Later decided to retain old wing as is and erect an additional new wing of four stories and basement to the front of the east wing and old main building, saving cost of razing east wing, also saving the space for storage & providing for much-needed modernization of front facade and entrance . Ground broken early June. New bldg 15,000 sq. ft. designed to consolidate talking book recording dubbing and proof-reading dept at basement level, offices for supt & his sec., braille and Large type editor, gen accounting, bookkeeping dept on street floor, ed research & production engineer, board room, space for the new tape recording program on 2nd floor, talk book research and prod, 3rd floor and gen storage 4th floor. As soon as new bldg. completed work start of renovation of 1st & 2nd floors of old main bldg and west wing. Changes in old main bldg--tear out old open wood stair, close off space between floors, drop ceiling leveling & coverin floors with asphalt tile, redecorateing large room behind present office of supt. to exhibition room and revamping rooms immediately above it into large room for library. First floor west wing, expanded mag circ & fundraising; second floor previously misc storage since transfer of talk book electroplating and pressing to annex in 48, will be done over to house stereographing and braille proofreading. Place now occupied by braille stere in annex used to expand machine shop Total cost including fixtures & equipment $250,000

October 26, 1955

Formal opening of new administration building. Arthur Tafel, architect

Planning to refurbish 1st floor west wing (fund raising & mag circ) & move lunch room to more central location.

1962

addition to shipping and storage

197428,000 sq. ft. 2nd floor addition for manufacturing & storage. Cost $550,000 completed Feb.

19804 floor rear addition, $2 million, 55,000 sq. ft. manufacturing space for tangible aids, other 3 floors for finished inventory storage and new materials storage, and shipping & receiving